

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY (continued)

SOUTHEASTERN

SURRY (Glenn Slade)

We received much needed rain Sunday evening and into Monday morning with most areas getting over 1". It is too late to help most of the corn or double crop soybeans that did not germinate, but we will have to wait until harvest to see how much cotton, peanuts, and early beans are affected.

CHESAPEAKE CITY (Watson Lawrence)

Corn continues to suffer with the lack of rain. Late planted corn is now silking and rain could make a difference in the yield. Earlier planted corn has smaller ears with kernels already set but not completely filled out. The water table is noticeably low in ditches and canals. Some farms have received scattered showers which make corn conditions highly variable. Soybeans are not developing much leaf area. Stands are poor behind small grains because of the lack of moisture. Some hay producers are beginning to check for nitrate problems. Vegetable produce sold at local farm markets is noticeably less than normal.

SOUTHWESTERN

LEE (Harold Jerrell)

Rainfall finally gave relief to the extreme drought conditions experienced this entire summer. Total rainfall for the week was 5.95 inches.

MONTGOMERY (Barry Robinson)

Last week's rainfall (1" or more depending on location) was very beneficial, but more is needed very soon. Hay and pastures are rebounding well. Rain came at a critical time for corn.

SCOTT (Scott Jerrell)

Welcomed rains fell last week, with 4 inches recorded in Gate City. Pastures are beginning to show green color again, but little growth is occurring due to overgrazing and heat. Early transplanted tobacco is being topped, with late transplanted tobacco only now beginning to show appreciable growth. Tomatoes finally started ripening, with good yields but higher than normal cull rates due to cracked or misshapen fruit. Last week, farmers at a small restaurant were laughing and smiling while eating lunch and watching it rain - a rare sight for the last 3 to 4 months.

SOUTHERN

PITTSYLVANIA (Stephen Barts, Jamie Stowe)

Tobacco producers are in the process of topping and working on the first pulling. Scattered rains throughout the county last week were a welcome sight. Grass looks greener, but we are not seeing any new growth.



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WEATHER
&
CROPS



Week of: July 23 – July 29, 2007

Number: 21

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CROP SUMMARY FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 29, 2007

The Commonwealth endured hot and dry conditions again last week with some areas receiving relief in the form of showers. Days suitable for work were 5.7. Topsoil moisture was short. Pasture conditions are gradually worsening with browning and overgrazing being reported. Livestock produces are still supplementing pastures with hay. Corn continues to twist and show signs of moisture stress in some areas while in other areas corn is thriving due to the variable storms and showers. Early planted soybeans are beginning to flower and pod. Rains in the last couple of days have farmers optimistic about their soybean crop. Early transplanted tobacco topping continues as late transplanted tobacco is beginning to show appreciable growth. Vegetable producers are irrigating heavily and harvesting summer squash, tomatoes, peppers, and cantaloupes. Other activities include post-emergence herbicide spraying, insecticide spraying, and preparing harvesting equipment for the fall.



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The Census Is Coming!

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CROP CONDITION PERCENT					
Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pastures	30	37	22	11	0
Livestock	1	10	36	49	4
Other Hay	32	37	18	12	1
Alfalfa Hay	15	24	35	23	3
Corn	22	35	30	12	1
Soybeans	20	30	41	9	0
Flue-cured Tobacco	4	13	42	37	4
Burley Tobacco	0	32	50	17	1
Dark fire-cured Tobacco	0	12	75	13	0
Peanuts	0	17	44	39	0
Cotton	13	20	47	20	0
Summer Potatoes	0	0	20	50	30
All Apples	0	12	43	45	0
Peaches	17	17	31	33	2
Grapes	0	7	32	61	0

CROP PROGRESS PERCENT-WITH COMPARISONS				
Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5 Year Avg.
Corn Silked	89	84	87	84
Corn Dough	48	35	47	46
Corn Dent	18	4	16	12
Soybeans Blooming	39	35	50	45
Soybeans Setting Pods	9	6	14	14
Tobacco, Flue-Cured Harvested	9	NA	3	5
Peanuts Pegged	85	80	79	76
Cotton Squaring	94	88	100	95
Cotton Setting Bolls	87	60	73	69
Summer Potatoes Harvested	45	40	66	75
Summer Apples Harvested	25	20	29	44
Peaches Harvested	59	40	31	42

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 29, 2007													
City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50) 1/		Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Mar. 1 to July 28	Mar. 1 to July 28 normal *	Last Week	Since June 1	June 1 dep. from normal *	Year to date	Year dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	82	61	87	55	72	-3	2300	2197	1.64	9.21	1.48	24.96	-0.77
Norfolk	87	69	93	65	78	-1	2518	2403	2.51	7.06	-1.34	18.96	-7.74
Richmond	89	66	95	62	78	0	2591	2391	.28	6.60	-1.07	21.94	-3.57
Roanoke	80	63	86	58	72	-5	2543	NA	.65	5.66	-1.59	18.87	-6.29
Wash/Dulles	89	66	95	60	78	2	2326	NA	.28	4.04	-3.17	15.36	-8.64

1/ Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86^o) + daily minimum (50^o))/2-50^o; where 86^o is used if the maximum exceeds 86^o and 50^o is used if the minimum falls below 50^o.
* Normal based on 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>.
N.A. = not available. T = trace. Source: USDA, NASS, Virginia Field Office.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals

WESTERN

ROCKBRIDGE (Jon Repair)

Most of the county is now dry with 70% reaching the critical stage. The row crop outlook is very bleak and forages have completely stopped growth in most areas. Alfalfa is still holding on. Leafhoppers continue to damage stands to the point of insecticide spraying is necessary. Livestock are being fed supplemental stored feeds. Pastures are almost non existent across 70% of the county.

CENTRAL

CAROLINE (McGann Saphir)

After another extremely hot, dry week, we finally received an excellent county-wide rainfall Saturday evening. Most of the county received between one to two inches of rain. After six to seven weeks of extreme heat and drought, the corn crop is in seriously poor shape. The recent rains, unfortunately, will do little to help the corn crop which has experienced stunted growth and greatly reduced germination from the extreme heat and dryness. Soybeans will benefit the most, as many early planted beans are flowering and podding up. Later planted beans are dormant, waiting for moisture. Hopefully, this rain should get them back on track before they have lost any yield potential. Pastures and hayfields are still in very poor shape and many livestock producers are investigating alternative feed sources such as green chopping and feeding corn. We have tested a number of samples for nitrates, as drought-stressed corn may have levels high enough to poison livestock, nothing has exceeded acceptable levels. Vegetable farmers have been irrigating heavily and harvesting tomatoes, peppers, summer squash, and cantaloupes.

EASTERN

ACCOMACK (Jim Belote)

We are experiencing a drought. The corn yield in many areas has been seriously hurt. A rain today would allow some corn to

(Accomack continued)

have an average yield, but much of the yield potential has been lost and cannot be recovered even if it rains. The soybean yield situation is becoming serious because most beans were after wheat, there is still time for recovery but moisture is needed now. Lawns in many areas are completely brown. Farmers are worrying about having over contracted corn. Tomato harvest and potato harvest continues at a rapid pace.

KING GEORGE (Regina Prunty)

Dry conditions continued throughout the week. Showers Sunday evening brought some much needed moisture. Pastures are brown. Some corn is being cut for silage since feed is needed for livestock and yields are expected to be extremely low. Late beans did not come up in many fields, others that did are much smaller than normal.

NORTHUMBERLAND (Matt Lewis)

Late-week rains improved soil moisture conditions in most areas. Rains were too late to help the corn crop, but perhaps just in time to rescue soybeans. Farm activities included post-emergence herbicide applications to soybeans, spraying soybeans for spider mites, and getting harvest equipment ready for fall harvest. Area livestock farmers are feeding winter hay supplies due to extreme drought conditions, and working to locate a source of feed for their animals this winter.

WESTMORELAND (Sam Johnson)

Dry weather continues here and corn and soybean as well as most all other crops continue to deteriorate. I am working on numbers for the Board of Supervisors and will be recommending request for drought disaster declaration from the state. Of immediate concern is hay or other feed for cattle. Producers are feeding next winter's hay and some are very short on hay. If feed cannot be found, there may be some early and forced cattle sales. The vegetable harvest continues, irrigation on these crops is occurring where water is available. Salt levels are rising in the Rappahannock River and associated tidal creeks, which may begin to limit irrigation.